

Thomas Davies (c1737-1812)

Introduction

This paper is an account of Thomas Davies contributions to the ornithology of Nova Scotia and Quebec over four postings to North America which covered periods between 1757 and 1790.

Davies spent about half of his 18 years in North America in the United States. A brief summary of his American postings is also included. Hopefully at some future date an ornithological historian will attempt to piece together his contribution there.

Davies left virtually no written record of his North American observations and collections. Some of his contributions can be pieced together from the publications of his friends, British ornithologists Thomas Pennant and John Latham. Given the many interconnections between Nova Scotia and Quebec I have prepared a single paper which appears under Nova Scotia and Quebec.

Denis Robillard, educator and writer, who lives in Windsor, Ontario is writing a book on the life of Davies. It is likely that the results of his extensive research will significantly expand the current meagre published accounts of Davies' life and work. Hopefully Denis's book will bring to light more information on Davies contribution to North American ornithology.

This paper broadly outlines the evidence that Davies was a much more important contributor to North American ornithology than his record suggests. This is based on evidence of his familiarity with the bird life in northeastern United States and Canada during his long residence there and his strong connections to Thomas Pennant and John Latham two the most important British ornithologists who published on North American birds in late 18th century.

I anticipate that this paper will have to be rewritten when new material is available.

Early Life

Thomas Davies was born about 1737 in southeast London near Woolwich. His career was intimately connected with the Royal Regiment of Artillery based at Woolwich.

In 1716 King George I ordered the establishment of two permanent companies of field artillery, each containing 100 men. In 1722 the Royal Regiment of Artillery was founded with four companies headquartered at Woolwich.

In 1741 the Royal Military Academy was founded at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich. The regiment grew rapidly and by 1757 it had expanded to 24 companies divided into two battalions.

In 1755 Davies entered the Royal Military Academy as a cadet. His timing turned out to be excellent for career advancement. During his career the Regiment continued to

expand rapidly eventually providing service in every British campaign and garrison in colonies around the world. Davies graduated in 1757 as a Second Lieutenant. He quickly moved through the ranks: First Lieutenant (1759), Captain (1771), Lieutenant-Colonel (1785), Colonel (1794). He eventually reached the rank of Lieutenant-General in 1803. Davies died in London in 1812.

Artillery officers studied drawing as part of their training. As noted by Hubbard:

Topographical drawing was the only means at the time of making a rapid and accurate visual record of military value and, as such, required the utmost attention to detail and fidelity to nature....

Over the course of his life, Davies became a first-rank artist and naturalist in his own right. Today he is largely known for his paintings of Canadian and American scenes. Davies dated artwork helps to track his movements.

It is not known when Davies acquired his strong interest in natural history and ornithology. Certainly there is a long history of British military officers taking an interest in developing natural history collections (Greer). Davies may have inherited his interest from his father or from association with a teacher or fellow cadet at Woolwich.

The explosion of important books on natural history and ornithology also encouraged his interest in nature. In 1735 the Swedish naturalist, Carl Linnaeus published the first of his twelve volumes of his *Systema Naturae* which revolutionized order in the natural world. In the 1750s the works of Mark Catesby's *Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands* (1732-43) and George Edwards's *A Natural History of Uncommon Birds* (1743-51) were well known to naturalists in Britain.

Over his long military career Davies spent 18 years in North America in four tours of duty including almost half of which was in Canada. This is a significant amount of time to pursue his passion for ornithology. In the mid to late 18th century few naturalists with Davies talent were in the field in eastern North America when much was still unknown about its avifauna.

In the circumstances it is not surprising that a talented naturalist, with wide knowledge of North American ornithology would be relied upon when he returned to England by leading British ornithologists such as Pennant and Latham.

Davies served four tours of duty in North America as follows;

- Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and New York State: 1757-1763;
- New York State: 1764-1767;
- New York State and Nova Scotia: 1773-1779;
- Quebec: 1786-1790.

Each of these tours are discussed with specific reference to Canada and Canadian ornithological records.

Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and New York State: 1757-1763

In July, 9 1757, 20 year old Davies, arrived in Halifax. He was part of the troop built-up in the British conquest of New France. In July, 1758 he participated with General Amherst in the successful assault on Louisburg. In September, 1758 he participated with Monckton in brutal raids on the Acadians in the Saint John River Valley of New Brunswick. In the late fall he was stationed at Fort Frederick, built on the ruins of the French Fort Menagoueche destroyed in 1755. The fort was located in current city of St. John at the mouth of the St. John River.

From his earliest paintings Davies had a tendency to include Canadian birds. Hubbard remarked on his painting of Halifax in 1757. He noted it included “several flights of birds [which] indicate the sportsman and a budding ornithologist”. It is not clear if Davies spent the winter of 1758-1759 at Fort Frederick or whether he accompanied Amherst to New York.

In 1759 Amherst was appointed Commander-in-Chief of British North American forces. In the spring of 1759 Davies was known to be carrying out river surveys in New York State. This was likely part of preparations for the British push to capture French possessions in the Lake Champlain, Richelieu River and upper St. Lawrence valleys.

Davies was with Amherst when he captured the French Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in July, 1759. Later, In the same year, another British force under Wolfe captured Quebec. After wintering in New York Davies was with Amherst in the capture of Montreal in 1760. This event ended French rule in Canada.

After the fall of Montreal in September, 1760 Amherst assigned Major Robert Rogers to a carry out a special mission to Detroit. Detroit, with a population of 2,000, was the third largest town in New France (after Montreal and Quebec). It occupied a critical position controlling movement of traffic between the upper and lower Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley.

The mission had two overall objectives:

- 1). inform French troops of the loss of New France, to take possession of all French forts in the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley watersheds and arrange for eventual deportation of French troops;
- 2) staff former French forts with British troops thus establishing British possession over former French territories

Amherst was impressed with Davies abilities as a soldier and an artist. Denis Robillard has found that Davies accompanied the Rogers expedition with a view to make drawings of the French fortifications. He worked in the company of Lieutenant Dietrich Brehm who was in charge of developing maps and take depth soundings.

The contingent left Montreal on November 13, 1760. With winter fast approaching they travelled quickly through the St. Lawrence valley, across Lakes Ontario and Erie. They accepted the surrender of the French forces at Detroit on November 29, 1760.

In addition to collecting plants Robillard discovered that Davies appears to have collected birds including a “Rufus-breasted Grebe”. Given the late arrival at Detroit this bird must have been collected in the spring of 1761. This strongly suggests that Davies remained in the Detroit area over the winter of 1760-1761. If more details come to light this record may eventually prove to be an important early record for the Red-necked Grebe.

Sixty years later American boundary surveyor, Joseph Delafield, collected what he described an unusual “duck” on October 9, 1820 on the American side of Lake St. Clair near the old French Fort Gratoit, north of Detroit. In his book *The Unfortified Border* (325) he wrote:

One of the men shoots a bird that upon examination proves unknown to us all. It is of the duck kind, beautifully feathered, with remarkable feet, not webbed like a duck. Skin the bird and leave it by to dry, intending to take it home for our naturalists....

Unfortunately Delafield’s specimen, set out to dry, was destroyed overnight by a roaming mammal. The limited description and duck size suggests that his bird could have been a Red-necked Grebe. It is also possible the specimen may have been a coot or a moorhen. Unfortunately Delafield’s bird will remain unidentified.

After the Detroit assignment Amherst selected Davies to carry out survey work largely on the American frontier between Lake Champlain and Niagara Falls. Davies carried out this work over the next three years. The survey included Lake Champlain, the St. Lawrence Valley, between Montreal and Lake Ontario, and all the drainage systems in New York State which flowed into Lake Ontario. Paintings from the period reveal Davies was in Rochester in 1761 and at Niagara Falls and Montreal in 1762. While his Montreal painting suggests Davies spent some time there during this period he seems to have mostly been in New York and New York State. Davies returned to England in 1763.

Birds Recorded from Quebec 1760-63

What was known about the birds in Quebec in the 18th century was largely from the casual sightings of observers in books published during the period of French possession of New France. None of these observations could be considered scientific although a careful reading of the literature one could identify close to one hundred species.

The most important work was the great ornithological treatise *Ornithologie*, authored by Methurin Jacques Brisson, published in 1760. Working with the Reaumur Collection in Paris at least 37 species from Quebec have been identified in *Ornithologie*. These were scientifically described by Brisson and some are considered first records for the species.

Reaumur's specimens were collected largely from the Medecin du Roi, Jean Francois Gaultier in the late 1740s and most of the 1750s. Additional details can be found on this website under the Province of Quebec.

While Brisson was able to attribute his Baltimore Oriole to Quebec he had no migratory details or specific locations. It is likely that Davies provided John Latham with this level of detail on the Baltimore Oriole (2, Part 1:433) in 1783:

Baltimore birds are found in many parts of America, the northern parts of which they occupy in summer, being seen sometimes as far as Montreal, in Canada where they come in May...

Another curious record can be found in Pennant when describing the range of the Maryland Partridge (Northern Bobwhite):

Frequent in Canada to the most southern parts of North America, perhaps to Mexico....Migrates from Nova Scotia, at the approach of winter, to the southern provinces, but numbers reside in the latter the whole year

We will probably never know what Pennant means by the "southern provinces" Certainly at the time "Canada" in his mid referred to the inherited British possessions of Quebec and Ontario distinct from Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador. Knowledge of Bobwhite in Canada at this time, which were only found on the north shore of Lake Erie, may well have come from information supplied by Davies. Davies is likely responsible for the statement from Latham when discussing the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (II, Part 1:770):

I have authority for saying that it breeds both at Halifax and Quebec.

One of the very few other records from Quebec at this time is an account of Purple Martins at Quebec. This record is cited by Alexander Wilson in his *American Ornithology* (2:55) where he mentions seeing it in great numbers at Quebec. This reference has been traced to an American soldier who was captured and imprisoned there after American General Montgomery's attempt to seize Quebec in 1776.

A curious anomaly from this period is the existence of a watercolour of an adult Golden Eagle painted by Pierre Paillou sometime after 1744. This artwork is in the Taylor White art collection in Blacker-Wood Library of Ornithology at McGill University. Paillou was one of the leading nature artists of his day and is known to have received numerous commissions to paint birds for Taylor White (1701-1772). White was a relatively obscure English contemporary of George Edwards. Paillou is best known to have painted many birds for British ornithologist, Thomas Pennant.

The inscription which accompanies the painting reads "the black-eyed eagle from the River St. Lawrence". If the eagle was collected by a British officer after the conquest, there is a possibility, given so few collectors in this period, that it was collected by

Davies and somehow ended up in White's collection. As will be noted in this paper there is a strong connection between Davies and Pennant but unless more details come to light Davies as the collector is pure speculation.

United States and Canada: 1764-1767

Davies served a second tour of duty in the United States in 1764. From his paintings scenes on Long Island and waterfalls such as multiple images of Niagara Falls, he appears to have been stationed primarily in New York. According to Robillard Davies purchased a property near Fort Edward, New York in 1764. Fort Edward was built at the carrying place for boats at the Great Falls on the Hudson River. Fort Edward was built by the British in 1755. Originally named Fort Lyman, it was renamed the following year (Wikipedia).

Davies returned to England in 1767. During this period he arranged for six paintings of waterfalls to be engraved in England between 1763 and 1768. These ended up in his Portfolio Six Views of Waterfalls published about 1768.

Aside from birds such as Bald Eagles which show up in Davies famous painting of Niagara Falls,(1768) there is very little historical evidence that he contributed to the knowledge of Canadian birds during this posting.

Davies in London 1767-1773

It was probably after his return to England in 1767 that Davies became known in natural history circles in London. Three of his six engravings of waterfalls were executed by Peter Mazell, who also engraved Pennant's works. Victoria Dickenson in her *Drawn From Life* (1998:196) speculates that Mazell may well have introduced Davies to prominent British naturalists Thomas Pennant, John Ellis, Joseph Banks and John Latham. She notes:

From 1767 on, when he returned to England after his second North American tour of duty, Davies became one of the circle of correspondents and informants of the European naturalists.

Davies wrote a paper entitled "On a method of preparing birds for preservation" which was read by influential naturalist, John Ellis, at a Royal Society meeting in 1770. The paper was eventually published in 1809 in the Society's *Philosophical Transactions* Volume XIII (1770-76). As noted by Greer, Davies is known to have made an appeal to British army and naval officers who took up posts in the far flung outposts of the Empire to make bird collections.

Through his military rank, connections, and interest it is known that Davies eventually amassed a huge ornithological collection from contacts all over the world. Latham in particular is full of details on birds described from the Davies collection particularly from South America, Asia and Australia. One can surmise that by 1770, from his proficient

knowledge of taxidermy, and records that can be solely attributed to him from Nova Scotia, that his interest in ornithology dates from his earliest days in North America.

While Davies is not known to have published details of North American birds, he had accumulated specimens for his bird collection, made drawings, as well as observed bird migrations and behaviours. This would eventually prove very useful to two important British ornithologists and authors, Thomas Pennant (1725-1798) who published *Arctic Zoology* (1781-85), covering the Birds in II:1783, and *Supplement* (1792), and John Latham (1740-1837) who published *General Synopsis of Birds* (I, II, III:1781-85) and *A General History of Birds: 1-11: (1821-28)*.

These important ornithological books used all the known published ornithological works on North American birds. They also appear to have relied heavily on Davies for up-to-date information on North American birds especially their references to New York State, Nova Scotia and Quebec.

All the specific information that Pennant and Latham published about the presence of birds in Nova Scotia is most certainly from Davies. Specific knowledge of birds of Quebec, not provided by other published authors such as Brisson in *Ornithologie* (1760) is almost certainly from Davies as well. Between 1760 and 1800 no other English or French naturalist is known to be working in Nova Scotia or Quebec during this period when *Zoology* and *Synopsis* were published. The great French and American ornithologist, Louis Jean Vieillot, visited Nova Scotia between 1792-1798. His largely obscure Nova Scotian bird records were important observations but published in the early 19th century after Pennant and Latham's work.

New York State and Nova Scotia: 1773-1779

Davies returned to North America arriving in Halifax in 1773. He moved with British forces to Boston in 1774. Hubbard suggests that he probably remained in the Boston area until 1775 retreating with General William Howe's forces to Halifax. Davies returned to America in August, 1776 participating with the British forces in fighting against the Americans at White Plains in October, and at the successful battle for Fort Mifflin on upper Manhattan Island in November, 1776. After a brief skirmish with Washington's forces in New Jersey, Rosemarie Tovell, in her brief biography of Davies in the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, notes that Davies served as commanding officer of Fort Mifflin until the Revolutionary War was effectively lost. In 1779 Davies returned to England.

It seems likely that during his two layovers in Halifax in 1773-1774 and 1775-1776 Davies had the opportunity to further his knowledge of Nova Scotian birds through observation and specimen collection.

Latham devotes an extended passage to Davies attempts to keep a Ruby-throated Hummingbird alive (*Synopsis* II:771) published in 1783. While no location is given it seems likely he was living at the time in the United States:

My friend Captain Davies informs me that he kept these birds alive for four months by the following method: -- he made an exact imitation of some of the tubular flowers with paper, flattened around a tobacco pipe, and painted them of a proper colour; these were placed in the order of nature, in the cage wherein these little creatures were confined; the bottoms of the tubes were filled with a mixture of brown sugar and water, as often as emptied; and he had the pleasure of seeing them perform every action; for they soon grew familiar, and took the nourishment in the same manner as when ranging at large, though close under his eye.

By the time of his return to London in 1779 Davies was an established figure in London natural history circles. In March, 1781 he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. According to Hubbard "Davies had been acquiring a reputation as a naturalist and particularly an ornithologist".

As noted by Greer:

Within the context of ornithology, an impressive bird collection with rarities was a recognized form of capital in the appropriate circuit, with significant exchange value and an indispensable prestige function that could advance its owner into the ranks of professional societies.

Tovell noted that "he exhibited his watercolours and painting regularly at the Royal Academy from 1771 to 1806. Some of Davies' bird paintings can be found in the Latham Collection in the Natural History Museum, in London.

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Birds Recorded in Nova Scotia 1757-58, 1773-1774 and 1775-1776 (Thomas Pennant)

Pennant attributes the following species from Nova Scotia from his *Arctic Zoology* (1783) and *Supplement* (1792):

Northern Bobwhite (Maryland Partridge II:318)
Turkey Vulture (Vulture II: 191)
Saw-whet Owl (Little Owl II:236)
American Kestrel (Little Falcon II:211)
Alder Flycatcher (Lesser Crested Flycatcher II:386)
Cedar Waxwing (Chatterer II:346)
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Golden-crowned Flycatcher II:403)

Pennant had a habit of not recognizing the contributions of others. Most modern ornithologists recognize that Latham was a more detail-oriented and important ornithologist than Pennant. Pennant mentions Davies twice: in descriptions of the Lesser-crested Flycatcher and the Golden-crowned Flycatcher. In *Supplement* he mentions a fish known as a Bullhead. He comments: "Taken off Nova Scotia. A drawing of it communicated to me by Col. Davies."

A curious record can be found in Pennant when describing the range of the Maryland Partridge (Northern Bobwhite):

Frequent in Canada to the most southern parts of North America, perhaps to Mexico....Migrates from Nova Scotia, at the approach of winter, to the southern provinces, but numbers reside in the latter the whole year.

The reference to “Canada” suggests ornithological information from Upper Canada since in the late 18th century only Upper and Lower Canada were referred to as Canada. The range of the resident Bobwhite population in 18th century “Canada” was confined to the north shore of Lake Erie. Davies visited the Detroit area in 1760, the Niagara area later in his first posting, and the Niagara area again in his second between 1764-1767.

Waldo Lee McAtee was an important and prolific 20th century ornithologist and ornithological historian. He authored “The North American Birds of Thomas Pennant” in the *Journal of the Society for the History of Natural History* 14:100-124 (1962-68).

In his records for Nova Scotia McAtee suggested Pennant’s “Lesser Crested Flycatcher” was the Acadian Flycatcher. Given that the Acadian Flycatcher is not known to breed in Nova Scotia this identification is highly doubtful. The limited description and the range of empidonax flycatchers in Nova Scotia seems to point to the fairly common and vocal Alder Flycatcher.

Birds Recorded in Nova Scotia 1757-58, 1773-1774 and 1775-1776 (John Latham)

An examination of John Latham’s Three Volume *Synopsis* and later his *Ten Volume General History* records additional species from Nova Scotia, and more interesting detail. While Latham does not attribute any of the records to Thomas Davies except the Saw-whet Owl, detailed first-hand accounts strongly points to a knowledgeable first hand observer such as Davies:

Ruffed Grouse (*General History* 8:236)

Latham includes the range of the Ruffed Grouse to various parts of North America including Nova Scotia. He provides quotes from Thomas Davies on this species, which do not relate specifically to Nova Scotia as much to his knowledge of this North American bird. The reference points to his considerable observational skills. The fact that *General History* was published in the 1820s, long after Davies left North America (1790) and died (1812), is an indication of Latham’s trust in Davies observations:

General Davies has informed me, that the male does this (drumming) at other times, as well as in the breeding season, and that he begins the flapping at first very slow, increasing in degrees, till he arrives at a stupendous velocity; after which he ceases, and crows like a Cock Pheasant, after an interval begins again.

This action is only at sunset; and the bird is observed to do the same when kept in the house.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Synopsis* II, Part 1:770):

Since Davies was in Nova Scotia and Quebec, prior to publication of *Synopsis*, Davies as the source is compelling;

I have authority for saying that it breeds both at Halifax and Quebec.

Eskimo Curlew (*Synopsis* III, Part 1:126):

As noted earlier Denis Robillard indicates that in 1764 Davies purchased a property on the Hudson River near Albany during his residence in the United States:

Inhabits the fens of Hudson's Bay. Appears near Albany [New York] the beginning of May, going further north, and returning to Albany in August. It stays there till September, when it departs for the South. It lays four eggs, and appears in flocks, young and old together, till their departure. Found in flocks in Nova Scotia in October and November. Feeds on the Black-berried Heath, and may be heard at a small distance by a kind of whistling note.

Saw-Whet Owl (Acadian Owl *Synopsis* 1:149)

The description was taken from a bird in my possession which came from North America. A drawing of this bird, lent to me by Captain Davies, makes it an inhabitant of Nova Scotia.

American Robin (Red-breasted Thrush *General History* 5: 46)

..... is a gentile bird, and said to be very numerous in Nova Scotia in the spring probably on the journey more northward; some few pairs however, are found to stay through the summer.

Snow Bunting (*Synopsis* II, Part 2:162)

.... In North America they advance no further to the south than Nova Scotia, never being found in New York.

Dark-eyed Junco (Black Bunting *General History* 5:339)

Inhabits America, shifting quarters according to the season; come to the Severn Settlement and Hudson's Bay the beginning of June, and stays a fortnight; passing into Nova Scotia to breed, and again by Severn Settlement in autumn on its return to the south.



John Latham's Acadian Owl (left image) from *Synopsis III* (1785)

In the 1780s and 1790s birds from “Canada” described by Pennant and Latham came from Lower Canada (Quebec) and Upper Canada (Ontario). “Canada” did not exist as a country, Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador were not considered part of Canada so they were described by Pennant and Latham separately. Some of their “Canadian” references may well have come from the Davies collection.

Unlike Pennant, Latham recognized the importance of Thomas Davies for his contributions. In his Preface to his *General History of Birds* I:xi (1820) he noted:

To Lieutenant-General Davies of the Royal Artillery, I am greatly indebted, from whose faithful pencil I have been furnished with very many exact representations

of new subjects, taken from different Ornithological Collections of his friends, independent of those in his own well-chosen cabinet of subjects in Natural History

Davies observations from Nova Scotia in 1757-58, and between 1773-1774 and 1775-1776 represent the most important ornithological records from the province between 1750 and 1800. The only other ornithological material prior to 1800 is found in the publications of the great French ornithologist, Louis Pierre Vieillot who visited the Halifax area on numerous occasions during his residency in the United States between 1792-98.

As the ornithological editor of the *Nouveau Dictionnaire* (1816-1819) Vieillot mentioned nine species he recorded in Nova Scotia. Vieillot is credited as the first describer of the Least Sandpiper off Nova Scotia. For an account of Vieillot in North America and Nova Scotia please see the separate paper on Vieillot.

Quebec: 1786-1790

In 1786 Davies was posted to Canada with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He was stationed at Quebec in charge of the artillery. He remained until 1790 when he returned to England for the final time.

For the most part Davies records from Quebec are largely found in Latham's much later work: *General History of Birds* (1821-29). Given that Pennant had finished publishing by 1791, here is only one reference in Pennant.

Birds Recorded in Quebec 1786-90 (Thomas Pennant)

In *Supplement* Pennant mentions Davies bringing back a Screech Owl from Quebec. Given the earlier publications of Pennant's works, this is his only reference to Davies or Quebec birds.

Screech Owl (Horned Owl of Quebec) *Supplement*: 413)

Birds Recorded in Quebec 1786-90 (John Latham)

For the most part Davies records from Quebec are largely found in Latham's much later work: *General History of Birds* (1821-29). Latham mentions the following species from Quebec:

Purple Sandpiper (Quebec Sandpiper 9:253)
Solitary Sandpiper (Green Sandpiper 9:274)
Screech Owl (Little Owl 1:326)
Owl species (White-fronted Owl 1:569)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Purple Martin (Purple Swallow 7:316)

Tree Swallow (Quebec Swallow: White-bellied Martin 7:312)
Cliff Swallow (Rufous-bellied Swallow 7:320)
Veery (Quebec Thrush 5:16)

Comments on the Cliff Swallow:

Inhabits North America, comes late to Quebec and its neighbourhood, builds under eaves of houses; makes a nest of clay, in the manner of the Martin, and chatters perpetually. It generally arrives in May and leaves in September.

A curious record in Latham's Quebec species is that of his "Northern Sandpiper" (*General History* 9:294). Michel Gosselin of the Canadian Museum of Nature examined the description provided with this record in considerable detail. In a note to me he has suggested that it is probably a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, a specimen collected in Australia and erroneously included by an aging Latham with Davies Quebec records.

Finally Latham noted Brown Creeper (*General History* 4:210) in "Canada". This information was likely supplied to him by Davies from his last tour of duty.

Later Life:

Davies was made a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, which was founded in 1788. Starting in 1797 he authored three papers for the Society on the following subjects:

The Jumping Mouse in Canada.
A Species of Muscicapa from New South Wales
Description of Menura Superba, a Bird of New South Wales 1802

Numerous authors who wrote about Davies noted that he collected for the famous Thirteenth Earl of Darby. Given that Darby was born in 1775 it seems likely that this would have to have been after Davies returned from Quebec in 1790. The Earl was a great collector of bird art amassing a total of 126 paintings of birds with names and localities executed by Davies between 1763 and 1812.

Conclusion

In summary there is virtually no published material on the ornithology of Nova Scotia and Quebec between 1760 and 1800. The only records appear to be records of Thomas Davies in the publications of Thomas Pennant and John Latham.

Thomas Davies was the most important source of information about the bird life of Nova Scotia and Quebec between 1760 and 1800. The only other ornithologist of consequence is Jean Francois Vieillot who listed 9 species from Nova Scotia during visits between 1792 and 1798.

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